

Stuttgart unveils urban terrain training site

Area near Panzer to serve multiple purposes for local troops

Story & photos by Melanie Casey

At first glance, the Military Operations Urban Terrain site near Panzer Kaserne appears as though it were the remnants of a sleepy village or perhaps an abandoned construction site.

Yet the six concrete, plywood and plaster laden buildings have recently been built to serve as a training ground in urban warfare for military units stationed throughout U.S. Army, Europe.

Strategic scenario

Soldiers from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), were on hand at a Dec. 2 ceremony to demonstrate just how realistic that training can be.

The troops staged a mock "surgical application" for the 40 or so invited guests, including 6th Area Support Group Commander Col. Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris; 1/10 SFG (A) Commander Lt. Col. Robert Warburg; and Naval Special Warfare Unit Two Commander Capt. Gerald Weers.

Representatives of the 7th Regional Training Support Center in Mannheim and local German contractors also attended.

Guests donned eye and ear protection and witnessed the Soldiers in action as they "stormed and took control" of the buildings during a 10-minute demonstration of how the MOUT site could be used.

Although the special forces Soldiers showed how the site might be used for their particular type of training 1/10 SFG (A) spokesman Maj. Scott Peck said "the kind of training that will be conducted ... will vary according to the type of unit that uses it."

"Combat units will focus on the traditional infantry offensive and defensive operations," Peck said.

"[Military police] may conduct enemy prisoner of war, crowd control or law enforcement scenarios. Other combat



[Above and below left] Special Forces Soldiers from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) storm a Military Operations Urban Terrain site building during the facility's Dec. 2 grand opening ceremony.

[Below right] Buildings at the site can withstand live fire munitions, demolitions and pyrotechnics.

support and combat service units may run peacekeeping operations scenarios," he added.

Built to last

In early 2002, key players in the team that would ultimately help design and build the site – including representatives from the

6th ASG Safety Office, 6th ASG Directorate of Public Works, Army Corps of Engineers, Special Operations Command, Europe, and 1/10 SFG (A) – met and "identified the training needs of the 10th Special Forces Group

and others in the U.S. Army, Europe, footprint," said Steve Hughes, chief of the Regional Training Support Center Mannheim.

Groundbreaking took place in December 2002, and construction began in March the following year.

The \$750,000 project was financed by the 7th Army Training Command but will be maintained by the 6th ASG.

Although the buildings are primitive and appear unfinished, they are sturdy.

The six one- and two-story buildings can withstand munitions from not only blanks and controlled live fire exercises, but also small demolitions and various pyrotechnics, Peck said.

"Mounted and dismounted approaches are possible as well as limited helicopter operations," he added.

Urban warfare training

Quoting Maj. Gen. Robert Scales in his opening remarks, Hughes said, "urban warfare, a subject many military professionals would prefer to avoid, is still with us. Moreover, it



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Maj. Scott Peck

1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne)

may be the preferred approach of future opponents."

Peck added, "As we have experienced in recent history ... the enemies of freedom use urban areas as a combat multiplier; they hide amongst the civilian population and conduct hit and run attacks."

Peck said this is one reason why the Stuttgart MOUT site exists – to train today's Soldiers in urban warfare methods and to afford them the ability to train closer to home.

